THE

RETIREMENT.

AN

ETHIC POEM.

11631.g.84
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Hic ſecura Quies; et neſcia fallere Vita;
Dives Opum variarum: hìc lætis Otia Fundis;
Speluncæ, vivique lacus: hìc frigida Tempe:
Mugituſque Boûm: molleſque ſub Arbore Somni.

VIRG.

By a GENTLEMAN, late of *Baliol College, Oxford.*

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BRITISH MUSEUM

THE

RETIREMENT.

AN

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TIR'D with the buſy Follies of the Town,
The fawning *Sycophant*, or proud Man's Frown:
From ſundry Ills that fond Belief attend;
A ſmiling Enemy, or treach'rous Friend:
Joyous I haſte, from throng'd *Auguſta*'s Tow'rs,
To verdant Scenes, imbrown'd with ſhady Bow'rs.

The driving Veſſel thus, by Tempeſt toſs'd,
Her Rigging torn, Maſt ſprung, and Rudder loſt;
If happ'ly ſteer'd, by Providence's Care,
To ſome ſafe Harbour, thro' the watry War:
Anchor'd ſecurely rides in ſhelt'ring Bay,
Free from the Dangers of the raging Sea.

To flow'ry Vales I wing my calm Retreat:
Content's fair Manſion! Innocency's Seat!
For Thee, ſweet Peace, all vain Delights forego,
To track the doubling *Lev'ret* thro' the Snow:
With various Bait to lure the ſcaly Brood,
Or ſpring the whirring *Pheaſant* in the Wood.
To fluſh the *Woodcock* down the ſpungy Glade,
Or ſett the *Partridge* in the tainted Shade.
Intent on Sports that circulate the Blood,
New-brace the Nerves, and ſtir the crimſon Flood:
Source of true Pleaſure! Spring of Roſe-lip'd *Health!*
Above the *Stateſman*'s Toil, or *Merchant*'s Wealth.

HAIL!

HAIL! *Goddeſs* *, Fountain of unmix'd Delight!
Companion dear! ſoft *Guardian* Day and Night!
Thy balmy Pow'rs affect our very Dreams,
Indulgent lead thro' Groves, near purling Streams;
And chear our Slumbers with their lenient Beams.
Chace nervous *Starts!* Imaginary Pain!
Confus'd *Ideas!* th' Horrors of the Brain!
Fled from the fretted Roof, thou deign'ſt to dwell
In the low *Cottage*, and the Straw-thatch'd *Cell.*
O! gently hover round my wiſh'd Abode;
By Thee forſook, we taſte no Earthly Good.
With downy *Pinions* my ſoft Couch o'erſpread,
And wave thy healing *Wand* around my Head.
Shield me, *Protectrix*, from the hoarſe *Catarrh*;
Or parching *Febris* in her fiery *Car:*
Pale *Hydrops!* with her complicated Train,
That deluges the little World of Man:

* HYGEIA, the Goddeſs of Health.

Meagre *Conſumption!* flattering Diſeaſe!
That ſaps the *Fort*, and wins by ſlow Degrees.
From Harms which oft' ſtill *Solitude* attend,
Dull mopiſh *Melancholy!* ſallow *Fiend!*
Or dire *Deſpair!* th' Effect of grumous Blood;
And thick Stagnation of the vital Flood.
Without thy Preſence, and propitious *Aid*,
Proud *Grandeur* droops, and languid *Honours* fade.
Sooth'd by thy Charms, Misfortunes lighter grow,
And Mortals ſmile, beneath a World of Woe.
Whilſt the free *Mind*, unclouded by the Fumes
Of wild *Intemperance*, her Pow'rs aſſumes:
Roams unconfin'd, beyond this nether *Sphere*,
To higheſt Realms, and breathes Celeſtial Air:
Self-rais'd on *Contemplation's* ſacred Wings,
Soars above *Monarchs*, and looks down on *Kings*.

WHAT then the Pleaſures vain *Ambition* finds?
That glaring Error of diſtemper'd Minds!

Night-

Night-blazing vap'ry *Meteor ! Glow-worm Spark !*
Which owes its borrow'd Luſtre to the Dark.
The *Ignis fatuus*, whoſe Eye-dazling Ray
Miſleads the Trav'ller from his purpos'd Way:
Thro' Bogs and Quagmires heedleſly he ſtrays,
Loſt and bewilder'd in the doubtful Maze.
Aſpiring, reſtleſs, cringing to his *Grace*;
She ſtoops, to riſe, and ſneaks to gain ---- a Place.
Not *Staff*, or *Coronet*, beſpeak the Brave:
Nor *Stars* and *Garters* dignify a *Knave*.
Without the Warrant of ſome worthy Cauſe,
Praiſe is a *Sneer*, ſmooth *Satyr* an Applauſe.
Intrinſick Merit upright Deeds proclaim,
Calm rural Honour, pure unſully'd Fame:
To Court, nor Camp, Ambition's Mart, confin'd,
Directs each Thought, and ſublimates the Mind.
Strict *Virtue* ſcorns the mask'd Diſguiſe of Art;
Reigns in the Soul, and warms the gen'rous Heart:
Retir'd, diffuſive ſpreads her gentle Beams,
From *Sylvan* Shades, ſoft Rills, and murm'ring Streams.

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Offspring of Heav'n! thy Fav'rite Sons inſpire:
Bright Emanation of Æthereal Fire!
Teach them falſe *Grandeur*'s Trappings to deſpiſe,
Since fair *Renown* attends the *Juſt* and *Wiſe*.
To ſhun the lofty *Battlements* of *State*,
And without *Titles*, to be *truly* Great.

DESERT, tho' humble, and declining *Praiſe*,
From loweſt *Orb* emits tranſcendant Rays:
Of *Pomp* regardleſs, in its lonely Seat,
Shines thro' the Gloom of an obſcure *Retreat*.
Then who'd vain *Glory*'s dang'rous Heights aſcend,
Where Tempeſts rage, and low'ring Clouds impend?
What honeſt Man wou'd falſify his Word,
Or break his Truſt, to ſtrut a worthleſs *L---d*?
Who'd quit a ſafe Repoſe, and tempt his Fate,
Or Ship-wreck *Conſcience*, to be ſerv'd in *Plate*?
While the drawn Sword, at *Damocles*'s Feaſt,
On ſlender Thread hangs o'er th' advent'rous Gueſt;

When

When hair-breadth' Scapes attend the rich Repaſt,
What Fool wou'd venture to indulge his Taſte?
The golden *Canopy*, the ſtately *Chair*,
Abound with gilded *Thorns*, and ſplendid Care.
Save Ceremony, Form, the bended Knee,
Forc'd Approbation, ſupple Flattery;
The lab'ring *Peaſant*, clad in home-ſpun Geer,
Has much the Odds, and 'Vantage of a *P--r*.

MARK well the ſtrange Viciſſitude of Things!
It governs *Nations*, and preſides o'er *K--gs*:
Which human Forecaſt ſeldom can prevent,
Or ward the Blow, 'till the wing'd *Shaft* is ſpent.
In this miſ-judging World, how oft' we ſee
Virtue diſtreſs'd, triumphant *Villainy*;
And penſion'd *Vice*, wou'd ſhame the three-legg'd Tree.
When o'er true *Greatneſs* tow'ring *Pride* prevails;
And tall *Ambition* ſpreads her boſom'd Sails,
To catch the vulgar Breath, and flying Gales:

When

When *Truth's* a Jeſt, *Integrity* a Boaſt,
A private *Life* is *Honour's* nobleſt *Poſt.*

SEE the rich *Merchant*, fickle Fortune's Slave,
Who truſts th' inconſtant Winds, and faithleſs Wave.
His laden Veſſel ploughs the furrow'd *Deep*,
Rides ſafe, while Storms are huſh'd, and Tempeſts ſleep;
'Till homeward-bound from either *India*'s Shoar,
Freighted with precious Gems, or glitt'ring *Oar:*
Lo! adverſe Winds, loos'd from th' *Æolian* Caves,
Embroil the *Ocean*, ſwell the tumbling Waves.
The reeling *Ship*, unable to ſuſtain
Th' inceſſant Shocks of the tumultuous *Main*,
Bulg'd on ſome Rock, or driv'n on ſhelvy Coaſt,
Sinks found'ring, luckleſs Crew and Cargo loſt!
His Hopes her ſafe Arrival fondly wait,
Nor knows he yet the *Criſis* of his Fate:
With Fears, Uncertainty, with Care perplex'd,
To Day a CRÆSUS, poor as JOB the next.

Lo!

Lo! the wan *Miſer*, ſcraping uſeleſs Wealth,
Prefers his *Coin* to chearful Eaſe, or Health.
Anxious for Gain, he roams about the Town,
Wou'd ſell his Soul, or Conſcience, for a Crown:
Deeming proud *Neb's* Command a ſacred Thing,
Worſhips the *Golden* Image of the *K---g*.
Famiſh'd 'mid Plenty, with Abundance curſt,
And in the cluſter'd Vineyard pines with Thirſt.
Doating on hoarded Bags, and mould'ring Pelf,
To feaſt his niggard Temper, ſtarves himſelf.
The Wretch infected with this dire Diſeaſe,
Muſt bid adieu to Happineſs, to Peace.
Tho' vaſt his Treaſures, and immenſe his Store,
The poor rich Man's emphatically poor.
No Interval of Joy this *Phrenſy* knows,
But like *Promethus'* Liver, hourly grows;
The Wound's ne'er heal'd, the *Vulture* ever gnaws.
If there's a damning Sin, tranſcendant Vice,
Save baſe INGRATITUDE, 'tis AVARICE.

Uncircumſcrib'd by ſolid Reaſon's Rules,
Scorn'd by the *Wiſe*, and e'en the Jeſt of *Fools*.
Like *Embrio's* immature, and crudely born,
Without Proportion, Symmetry, or Form.
Devoid of *Juſtice*, kind *Beneficence*;
Itſelf both *Center*, and *Circumference*.
Swoll'n *Dropſy* of the Mind, it taints the Whole;
Corroſive *Plague!* the *Cancer* of the Soul!

TRY all th' enticing Blandiſhments of *Senſe*;
The ſumptuous *Banquet* gorg'd at *Health's* Expence;
Scene of loud *Mirth*, or gay *Impertinence*.
When once his craving Appetite's ſubdu'd,
The ſated *Glutton* loaths the luſcious Food.
Plain wholeſome *Viands* Nature's Wants ſupply;
More is Exceſs, 'tis ſenſual *Luxury*.
Lo! in the *Wilderneſs's* dreary Waſtes,
By cat'ring *Ravens* fed, the *Prophet* feaſts.
Try the full *Goblet*, the brim-ſparkling *Cann*,
To raiſe the Spirits, and degrade the Man:

The heated Brain to jarring Broils gives Birth,
And turns to Feuds th' Extravagance of Mirth:
The *Bacchanalian* Crew no Order knows,
But, like the *Lapithæ*, conteſt with Blows.

TRY the ſoft Raptures of the *Syren*'s Song,
While ſure Deſtruction hangs upon the Tongue;
And Death melodious, draws th' attentive Throng:
Pleaſures are falſe, and fading Beauty's Charms,
Nor ſolid Joys are found in CELIA'S Arms,
Like thoſe that haunt the Woods, or flow'ry *Lawn*;
Purſue the bounding *Roe*, or wanton *Fawn*:
Or when, by Twilight's Dusk, we penſive rove
Thro' the brown *Viſto*'s of the chequer'd *Grove*:
While warbling *Philomel* the Shades among,
In ſoft Complainings juggs her Ev'ning Song:
Or ſweet-ton'd *Wood-Lark* on the tender Spray,
Melodious chaunts his ſolitary Lay.
Or thoſe by *Wiſdom's* ſov'reign Aid refin'd;
That flow from Thought, and worthy Human kind!

Food of the Soul! they chear the guiltleſs Breaſt;
Improve by Time, and bear Reflection's Teſt.

THUS our firſt Parents, in the fragrant Grove;
Sweet Scene of Innocence! bleſt Seat of Love!
On Roſe-deck'd Couch reclin'd, and Beds of Flow'rs,
Fann'd by ſoft Gales, in *Amarynthine* Bow'rs,
In mutual Solace paſs'd the ſmiling Hours.
Till fatal Taſte of th' interdicted *Fruit*,
Doom'd them to Death! to periſh with the Brute.
Seduc'd by SATAN's Wiles,-----to be as Gods;
Were driv'n from Bliſs, and EDEN's fair Abodes.
Chearleſs to wander 'long the dreary Coaſt,
And wail, heart-griev'd, the *Paradiſe* they loſt.

WHAT ſhall we ſay of the Park-faunt'ring Crew?
How paint their Foibles, how their Folly ſhew?
Of ſome who trip the *Mall*, or buz at Court,
Like Stingleſs *Drones*, and form'd in Nature's Sport?

Loud,

Loud, arrogant, with Self-perfection fraught,
Above the Strength, and Dignity of Thought:
Pleas'd without Reaſon, chagrin'd *ſans* Offence,
They ſeem the true *Antipodes* of Senſe.
With rich embroider'd Coat, and ſcrew'd Grimace,
Mien *Alamode*; th' Effrontery of Face;
Meer Outſide, Pertneſs, Vanity, and Lace.
Their own dear Forms ſo much their Pride engage,
Each ſeems the fond NARCISSUS of the Age:
The planiſh'd *Mirrour*, and refracting *Glaſs*,
Portrays Sir FOPLING, and reflects the *A*----.
In ev'ry Scene they're ſuch unmeaning Elves,
They live the ſharpeſt Satyr on themſelves.
Thus Straws and Feathers on the Surface ſwim,
But *Pearls* lye deep, and *Judgment* dwells within.

HAIL! ſilent Shades, ye Woodlands, Meadows, hail!
Where undiſturb'd, in th' unfrequented *Vale*;

In

In ſearch of *Knowledge*; valuable Store!
The ſtudious Reas'ner turns the *Sages* o'er;
Or famous *Bards*, who wrote in Days of Yore.
With Care conſults each venerable Page,
And gains Inſtruction from the former Age.
With *Optic* Tube his ſteady Eyes ſurvey
The *Planetary* Worlds, or *Milky-Way*.
Traverſe the *Heav'ns*, or ken the vaſt *Expanſe*,
Where Spheres harmonic roll in *Myſtic* Dance:
View the fix'd *Stars*, or Midnight full-orb'd Moon,
Serenely riding at her higheſt *Noon*,
With borrow'd *Rays*, and Splendour not her own:
By the ſupream CREATOR kindly plac'd,
To guide the Trav'ler thro' the dreary *Waſte*:
Whoſe pow'rful Influence o'er the *Sea* preſides,
And rules the ebbing and the flowing Tides.
The *Sun*, far darting from his beamy Height
Prolific Warmth, and Floods of ſtreaming Light.

FAIR Nature's Works below He now explores,
And tracks the *Goddeſs* thro' her various Stores:
Surveys the habitable Globe around;
Or ſeeks God's Wonders in the vaſt Profond:
Where huge *Leviathan* his Paſtime keeps,
Enormous rolls, and tempeſts all the Deeps.
Or friendly *Dolphin* ſports, erſt fam'd to land
ARION, tuneful Bard, on diſtant *Strand.*
Or *Pilot-Fiſh** ſelf-ſteering (wond'rous Tale!)
Itſelf both Rudder, Hulk, Shrouds, Maſts, and Sail.
Where Sea-green NEREID's, with their azure Train,
And ſounding TRITONS crowd the liquid *Plain.*
Curious inſpects the *Vegetable* Kind;
From the tall *Cedar*, nodding to the Wind,
To th' humble *Shrub*, in ALBION's Valleys found,
Or the low *Ivy*, creeping on the Ground.
With nice Reſearch attends the gradual Strife
Of half-form'd *Embrios* kindling into Life.

* OPPIAN, in his *Halieuticks*, gives a Deſcription of this Fiſh.

Thence

Thence his enraptur'd Thought attempts to ſcan
GOD's nobleſt Work, the *Microcoſm* of MAN.
Compos'd of Body, and a thinking Soul;
One fram'd to ſerve, the other to controul:
With *Will* to act, with *Reaſon* to reſtrain
Strong *Paſſions*, which a furious War maintain:
Conquer by Turns, and hold alternate Reign.
With pow'rful Sway their utmoſt Force employ;
Fond *Hope*, wild *Fear*, pale *Grief*, and laughing Joy.
Hence *Conſcience*, Judge impartial in our Breaſts,
Each *Act* approves, condemns, applauds, deteſts.
Hence due Rewards exalted Worth enroll,
And Puniſhment awaits the guilty Soul.
Aſſiſting GRACE prevents each wilful Sin;
Th' inmate DIVINITY! the GOD within!

MAN boaſts alone the wide *Dominion* giv'n
O'er *Beaſts*, and *Birds* that wing the *Copes* of Heav'n.
Free *Agent*, form'd with *Power* to ſtand, or fall,
Slave to himſelf, deputed *Lord* of All.

In middle State, below the *Angels* plac'd,
Above the *Natives* of th' extended *Waſte.*
For him VERTUMNUS ſpreads th' impurpled Bloom,
And *Eaſtern* Breezes waft the rich *Perfume.*
Th' induſtrious *Bee* her *Summer* Task renews,
Extracts the liquid *Sweets* and pearly *Dews:*
To her ſtor'd *Hive* conveys the raviſh'd Spoil:
The fatt'ning *Olive* pours her Floods of Oil.
To glad the Heart, and Chearfulneſs diffuſe,
The cluſter'd *Grape* diſtends with nect'rous Juice.
For Him the woolley Flock their *Fleece* prepare;
The ſlow-pac'd *Ox* drags on the ling'ring *Share:*
Blind to his Fate, in flow'ry Paſture feeds,
To Slaughter doom'd: The *Sheep* in Silence bleeds.
The flinty *Rock* its grateful Tribute brings,
To ſlake Man's Thirſt, burſts forth in cryſtal Springs.
Indulgent Heav'n, to cloath the thirſty Plains,
Gives the ſoft Breeze, and ſends refreſhing Rains.
Its various *Boon* beſtows with laviſh Hand,
And crowns with waving *Corn*, the fertile *Land.*

Nor in full Pride was SOLOMON array'd
Like the Field *Lilly*, or the verdant *Blade*.
That *Pow'r* creative, whom Mankind adores,
Rides in the *Tempeſt*, in the *Thunder* roars:
Blooms in each *Flow'r*, and bloſſoms in the *Trees*;
Speaks in the *Wind*, and whiſpers in the *Breeze*.
Supream! Omnipotent! no Limit knows;
But in the fiery *Pillar* dreadful glows.

SING, heav'n-born *Muſe*, the GODHEAD! ſov'reign LORD!
Th' Almighty FIAT! the Eternal WORD!
That SPIRIT, which brooding o'er the boundleſs *Void*,
Spake this fair World, from *Anarchy* deſtroy'd.
Let the tongu'd *Utt'rance* to his *Goodneſs* raiſe,
Th' *Incenſe* of *Pray'r*, the *Sacrifice* of *Praiſe*.
Let the deep *Organ* ſwell the ſolemn Chord,
In *Anthem* high, and ſing unto the LORD.
The raptur'd *Soul* rejoice in *Hymns* divine,
While liſt'ning *Angels* in the *Chorus* join;
Who proſtrate fall before the heav'nly *Throne*,
And worſhip the *myſterious* THREE in ONE.

HAPPY

HAPPY the Man, reclin'd in rural Shade,
By ſpreading *Elms*, and twining *Poplars* made;
Whom no vain *Hopes*, no baſe *Deſires* enſlave;
Who well employs what bounteous Nature gave;
Great without *Pride*, without *Ambition* brave:
Nor Self-tormenting *Av'rice* breaks his Reſt,
Nor pining *Envy* grieves, nor *Cares* infeſt
The ſettled Quiet of his peaceful Breaſt.
Who ne'er in *Folly*'s Path, unthinking ſtrays,
Nor *Pleaſure* lures him from fair *Virtue*'s Ways:
To ſome good *End* he wears each well-ſpent Day;
Reſerv'd, yet chearful, without Lightneſs gay.
With *Hope* the Future views, with *Joy* the Paſt,
Improves the preſent Hour, nor dreads his laſt.
Himſelf on *Earth*, in Thought he ſoars on high,
Breathes but to know, and lives, to learn to die.
Like JACOB's Ladder; ſacred Hiſtory!
The Foot on Earth, its Summit reach'd the Sky.

Till full of Days, and bending to the Grave,
Sets bright, like PHÆBUS in th' *Heſperian* Wave.
Feels Joys beyond thoſe TIME has ſtol'n away,
And drops, like Fruit *, delicious in Decay.

GRANT, gracious Pow'r! that nought my Reſt invade,
In ſtudious Leiſure, and the letter'd Shade;
With ſweet Content my number'd Days to ſpend,
Bleſs'd in the Converſe of ſome faithful Friend.
Grant me, in *Sylvan* Scenes, and learned Eaſe,
To live unblam'd, and lay me down in Peace.

THUS HORACE, antient *Bard*, in *Sabine* Field,
Enjoy'd what Sweets the Groves and Meadows yield.
Near TIBER's Banks, at fair PRÆNESTE's Bow'rs,
In learn'd Retirement paſs'd his ſilent Hours.
Thus LELIUS clos'd his Days in rural Joys;
Of Courts regardleſs, Vanity, and Noiſe.

* The Medlar.

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